



Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2006

No. 51

House of Representatives

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN ED CASE OF HAWAII WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2006

CONGRATULATING CHARTER SCHOOLS AND THEIR STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES FOR THEIR ONGOING CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 781, which congratulates and commends charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education and the public school system.

Charter schools have been and continue to be a modern-day public education story filled with successes and accomplishments. These schools contain the key ingredient in successful schools: active participation not only from teachers and students, but of the entire community. When the whole community--from parents, to businesses and community organizations, to entire neighborhoods--has a critical role in contributing to their local schools, the outcomes are tremendous. These schools have consistently enabled students to achieve academically and contribute positively to their communities.

In my state of Hawai'i, charter schools have been an exciting development in public education in decades. With more and more charter schools emerging each year, currently 27, they have managed to succeed despite institutional opposition in bringing their brand of education in the communities.

These growing pains and other obstacles make this national recognition even more deserved. But for these very reasons, charter schools also deserve their fair share of resources from federal and state governments.

A specific source of great pride within the Hawai'i charter school community is the development of Native Hawaiian charter schools. Na Lei Na'auao, the Hawaiian Charter School Alliance, serves over 1,500

Native Hawaiian public school students. The Alliance, whose focus is "Education with Aloha" seeks to enable Native Hawaiian students to achieve educational success with culturally-driven methods.

The Native Hawaiian charter schools and Hawai'i's other charter schools, both existing and future, need a federal government to be clear and unequivocal in its continued support for the concept of charter schools. They also need full parity in funding between traditional public schools and charter schools.

H. Res. 781 is welcome and needed, but these great words must now be partnered with action. I look forward to working with my colleagues and other charter schools believers toward this realization of the dream.